

Montana Department of Environmental Quality 2006 Mini-Grant Call for Applications

Background:

Using federal Clean Water Act Section 319 funding, the Montana Department of Environmental Quality is seeking to fund local education and outreach efforts that address water quality issues. Under the 2006 mini-grant program, \$20,000 is available for education projects that are focused on water quality and nonpoint source pollution. Mini-grants of up to \$1,500 will be awarded. Applicants must provide a minimum 40% local non-federal in-kind or cash match.

Objective:

The mini-grant program will assist local groups working on water quality resources issues, by providing funding to address water quality and nonpoint source pollution. Focusing on education and outreach, the grants provide a mechanism to increase awareness of local nonpoint source pollution issues and to improve water quality through educational activities. Successful applicants must demonstrate effective use of grant money through projects that highlight water quality and nonpoint source pollution topics in their area.

Schedule:

Applications will be accepted during two rounds in 2006-2007, with approximately \$10,000 available during each round. The first round will begin on June 1, 2006 with a request of applications. Applications must be received by July 1, 2006, with successful applicants being notified by July 15, 2006. The second round will begin on January 1, 2007 with another call for applications. Applications must be received by February 1, 2007, with successful applicants for the second round being notified no later than February 14, 2007.

Grant Announcement	Application Deadline	Award Notification	Funding Available	Available Money Amount
June 1, 2006	July 1, 2006	July 14, 2006	July 28, 2006	~\$10,000
January 1, 2007	February 1, 2007	February 14, 2007	February 28, 2007	~\$10,000

Mini-grant Criteria and Evaluation Process:

Successful projects will focus on ONE activity addressing water resource needs. Partial funding will also be considered if part of an event (conference, training) was donated to water quality awareness/education. The project MUST address larger watershed efforts in their region. The project applicant can be a local watershed group (if a legal entity), conservation district, county extension service, school, etc. and must have the ability to manage federal funding. DEQ encourages not only entities that have

previously used this program, but also newcomers. Preference may be given to new entities seeking funding if they display interest in continuing and/or expanding a program in their local area, once mini-grant projects have been completed. The hope is that once mini-grant program start-up money is used, a given entity will actively seek additional opportunities to remain being a presence in a watershed or region.

Each application will be reviewed and approved for funding by a panel from the Montana Watershed Coordination Council's Education & Outreach subcommittee that includes individuals from a range of organizations. Present members are: Andrew Jakes-Department of Environmental Quality, Robert Ray-DEQ, Frances Moore-MT Watercourse, Steve Merritt-Montana Association of Conservation Districts, Alan Rollo-Sun & Teton Watershed Groups, Suzanna Carrithers-Montana State University Extension, Laurie Zeller-Department of Natural Resources and Conservation.

Each application must address:

- How does this project address watersheds, water quality and nonpoint source pollution?
- What specifically is the project?
- Where will the project take place?
- When will the project take place?
- Why will this project take place?
- Who or what will benefit from the project?
- How is the cost justified? Please provide a budget. How will the 40% minimum local-match be met?

Each mini-grant recipient will be required to submit a final "report" that summarizes the activities and outcomes supported by the grant. For example, if the project is a monitoring project, what are the findings? If it is a workshop or training, what is the agenda and how many people will participate? What are some issues/concerns from participant feedback? If the project is preparation of a video or brochure, include that final product. Final reports should contain images that display participation and excitement through local efforts. Additionally, all successful applicants must develop a press release to be included in local newspapers. Support can be provided by DEQ when writing press releases. Grants will be awarded on a reimbursement basis. Successful applicants should complete the project, submit claims for reimbursement, and submit the final report at the same time.

For more information on the Mini-grants, or for assistance in preparing the grant application, please contact:

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Watershed Protection Section
Department of Environmental Quality
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Mini-Grant Application Format

Please include the following information in your application. Use as much detail as necessary. Anticipated application length: Two pages with no attachments.

Contact Information:

- Applicant name/organization
- Contact information (individual contact, address, phone number, fax and e-mail)

Project Description:

- Project Title and location
- What water quality or nonpoint source pollution issue is being addressed?
- What activities are planned to address this water resource issue?
- Who are the instructors/project leaders, and what are their qualifications?
- Where will the project/training/workshop/monitoring be held and why?
- How will transportation be provided to the site?
- What contingencies have been made for rain days, or alternative locations?
- If equipment is being purchased, where will it be housed and how will it be maintained?
- How many participants will be involved?

Objectives, Goals & Outcomes

- What skills and abilities are to be developed, and what knowledge is to be gained from the project activities?
- How will pre- and post-project participant knowledge, skills or behaviors be evaluated?
- What is the minimal level of acceptable performance?

Budget

- What is the cost of the project? List by line-item all the anticipated expenses.
- How will the watershed education & outreach funds be used? Show each expense and indicate where the funding will come from, watershed education grant, local fund raising, or in-kind contributions from school district, agencies, conservation district, etc.

Project Continuation

- What opportunities exist for project continuation or expansion? DEQ encourages not only entities that have previously used this program, but also newcomers. The hope is that once mini-grant program start-up money is used, a given entity will actively seek additional opportunities to remain being a presence in a watershed or region, by encouraging local communities to embrace the project and gain local support in continuation.